

## Mayor's Minute - August 7, 2019

In 2009, the District of Summerland Council hired a Planner responsible for assisting the District in meeting the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets of Bill 27 enacted by the Province in 2008: 33% less than 2007 levels by 2020 and 80% less by 2050. To further illustrate our commitment to take action on the changing climate, the District added these targets to our Official Community Plan (OCP) and signed the BC Climate Action Charter, a voluntary agreement between the Province, Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) and local governments to take action on climate change.

The Planner and nine other staff members, with community members who sat on the Climate Action Advisory Group, completed the Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP) in 2011. The Action Plan incorporated public input from workshops and open houses and was a roadmap for achieving the GHG emissions reduction targets set out in the OCP. An update to the CCAP is being worked on now and is expected to come to Council for adoption later this year.

The 2011 Community Climate Action Plan includes seven climate action goals, two of which are to “promote energy conservation and dissemination of renewable energy technologies” and to “demonstrate municipal leadership”. The first goal includes two initiatives: “encourage energy conservation in buildings” and “support the development and utilization of renewable energy sources.” The second goal outlines six initiatives including: “Support Summerland’s Climate Action Fund and improve energy efficiency of municipally owned and operated buildings”.

Although there are other goals in the CCAP, this Mayor’s Minute focuses on initiatives related to energy use in Summerland. Here are just a few:

- Each year Council allocates specific funds to offset Climate Action operations. Any surplus funds at the end of each year are transferred into the District’s Climate Action Reserve Account, which can only be used to reduce GHG emissions in Summerland. This amount comes from three sources: CARIP (see below), 0.001% of the District’s annual operating budget, and the Sustainability Coordinator’s wage is paid for 50/50 from general taxation and the electrical utility fund.
- Currently, all energy sold in Summerland is purchased from FortisBC, then distributed by the Summerland Electrical Utility. To advance opportunities to benefit from local renewable energy projects, in 2016 the District hired a Sustainability/Alternative Energy Coordinator; in 2018 the General Manager, Electrical Utility position was added to District staff. There are many benefits to owning our electrical utility, including be able to generate energy locally and keep money (that currently goes to FortisBC) in the local economy.
- Early last year, Summerland was conditionally awarded \$6 million in federal grant funding for a Solar+Storage project, an initiative that will see an array of approximately 3200 solar panels and battery storage added to the electrical utility’s assets. A proposed site has been selected, but a final decision will not be made by council until further testing confirms this site is suitable for the project.
- The District reports annually on emission reductions to the Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program (CARIP). In 2018, the District received \$32,883 from this program.
- Summerland has three Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations installed and has applied for funding to add two Level 3 stations. On August 12, Council is discussing an application for funding to install additional stations throughout the District. (An empty battery takes approximately 4 hours to fully charge at a Level 2 station; 30 minutes to charge to 80% full at a Level 3 station.)
- A switch to LED streetlights completed in 2018/2019 is expected to save the community over \$72,000 each year in operating costs.
- In 2015 the District implemented its Distributed Generation (Net Metering) Program. This program allows residents with their own energy generation systems, such as rooftop solar, to

connect to the Summerland electrical grid and receive a credit for any excess energy produced.

- The District's net metering program has recently been updated and will be re-launched at an open-house style event on August 27 from 3 to 6 pm at the Arena Banquet Room.

Please note that Mayor's Minute will not be in the August 22 edition of the Herald; the column will resume August 29.